

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-14 EA-09 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00
OIC-02 MCT-01 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 EPG-02 AID-05
COME-00 SSM-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 HEW-06 /157 W

-----077583 260824Z /23

P R 251532Z JUL 77

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9637

INFO: RUQMAD/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 1347

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS GENEVA 6234

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECOSOC, EGEN, UN

SUBJECT: 63RD ECOSOC: AGENDA ITEM 4: ADMISSION OF PLO TO FULL
MEMBERSHIP IN ECWA

REF: GENEVA 6190

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT MADE BY AMBASSADOR WELLS
IN PLENARY SESSION FRIDAY EVENING, JULY 22, PRIOR TO
VOTE ON RESOLUTION GIVING PLO FULL MEMBERSHIP IN ECWA
REPORTED REFTEL.

MR PRESIDENT,

WE HAVE LISTENED WITH INTEREST TO THE POINTS
ADVANCED BY DELEGATIONS INTRODUCING AND SUPPORTING DRAFT
RESOLUTION E/L 1778, WHICH WOULD GRANT THE PALESTIN
LIBERATION ORGANIZATION FULL MEMBERSHIP STATUS IN THE
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA. THEY HAVE RELATED
THIS MOVE TO THE NEED TO FACILITATE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. AS MY DELEGATION
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STATED IN THE COORDINATION COMMITTEE YESTERDAY MORNING,
THE UNITED STATES HAS SUPPORTED AND CONTINUES TO SUPPORT
ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING
OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. HOWEVER, THE QUESTION OF PLO
MEMBERSHIP IN ECWA IS, IN OUR VIEW, AN ENTIRELY SEPARATE
MATTER.

THIS PROPOSAL RAISES ISSUE OF SUBSTANTIAL IMPORTANCE WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS AS AS INSTITUTION. MOREOVER, WHILE WE OF COURSE RECOGNIZE THAT IT IS WITHIN ECOSOC'S PURVIEW TO DEAL WITH QUESTIONS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS, THE ADOPTION OF THIS RESOLUTION WILL INTRODUCE A PRECEDENT INTO THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM WITH SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS. HITHERTO THE PRACTICE OF THIS COUNCIL HAS BEEN TO GRANT FULL MEMBERSHIP ONLY TO STATES. THERE IS NO PRECEDENT ANYWHERE IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM FOR ACCORDING NON-STATES FULL MEMBERSHIP STATUS. THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM IS BUILT ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT STATES WHICH PARTICIPATE IN AN ORGANIZATION PARTICIPATE AS SOVEREIGN EQUALS, AS EMBODIED IN ARTICLE II, PARAGRAPH ONE, OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER. IN NOT ONE OF THE UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS IS FULL MEMBERSHIP SHARED WITH NON-STATES.

MR PRESIDENT, IN THE VIEW OF MY DELEGATION, MEMBERSHIP ENTAILS BOTH RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS. FULL MEMBERSHIP HAS AND SHOULD BE LIMITED TO THOSE WHO ARE WILLING TO ACCEPT FULL OBLIGATIONS AND ARE CAPABLE OF IMPLEMENTING THEM. IN TERMS OF COMPOSITION OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS, THIS COUNCIL HAS DEALT WITH AND HAS SET PRECEDENTS, FOR A NUMBER OF ASPECTS OF PARTICIPATION. FOR EXAMPLE, SOOME REGIONAL COMMISSIONS INCLUDE STATES WHICH ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS. AGAIN, SOME UNCLASSIFIED

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COMMISSIONS INCLUDE STATES WHICH ARE NOT LOCATED IN THE REGION. BUT THERE IS NO PRECEDENT FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP BY A NON-STATE.

THE DECISION OF THIS COUNCIL TO CREATE A PRECEDENT FOR A "MIXED" COMMISSION CONSISTING OF BOTH STATES AND NON-STATES IS A MATTER OF IMPORTANCE TO ALL THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS OF THE UN SYSTEM. IT IS A QUESTION, MR PRESIDENT, ON WHICH MY DELEGATION WOULD HAVE LIKED TO HEAR THE CONSIDERED OPINIONS OF OTHER REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS WHICH AT PRESENT ARE CONSTITUTED AS INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES IN TERMS OF FULL MEMBERSHIP PARTICIPANTS. WE HAVE LISTENED TO THE ARGUMENTS OF A NUMBER OF DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES ARGUING THAT THE CASE WE ARE REQUESTED TO CONSIDER IS AN EXCEPTION. WE CANNOT AGREE WITH THE LOGIC OF THE ARGUMENT THAT, IN RECOGNIZING THAT AN EXCEPTION IS BEING MADE, WE WOULD SOMEHOW BE PROTECTING THE PRINCIPLE OF STATE MEMBERSHIP AND WOULD NOT BE SETTING A PRECEDENT. THE ONLY WAY TO PROTECT THE PRINCIPLE IS TO ADHERE TO IT. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF AN INNOVATION IS TO BE INTRODUCED IN THE MEMBERSHIPS OF THE REGIONAL

ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS, THE IMPLICATIONS OF SUCH A CHANGE SHOULD BE EXAMINED AND ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE DEFINED. BUT FOR THAT WE WOULD NEED MORE TIME, MR. PRESIDENT. I HAVE CITED MY DELEGATION'S CONCERNS ON PRECEDENT. I WOULD NOW LIKE TO EMPHASIZE STRONGLY ALBEIT BRIEFLY THAT DRAFT RESOLUTION E/L. 1778 WILL COMPLICATE THE CURRENT EFFORTS TO REACTIVATE MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS, WHERE THE STATUS OF THE PLO AND PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION IS ONE OF THE KEY PROBLEMS TO BE RESOLVED BEFORE GENEVA CAN BE RECONVENED. FOR THESE REASONS, MR PRESIDENT, MY DELEGATION WILL VOTE AGAINST THIS RESOLUTION IF BROUGHT TO A VOTE. WE STILL SINCERELY HOPE THAT THIS RESOLUTION WILL NOT BE BROUGHT TO A VOTE, AS THIS IS SO CLEARLY A DIVISIVE ISSUE AT UNCLASSIFIED

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THIS CRITICAL TIME.

MR PRESIDENT, WITH RESPECT TO DRAFT RESOLUTION E/L.1777, WHICH WOULD GRANT MEMBERSHIP IN ECWA TO THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT, MY DELEGATION WILL BE PLEASED TO JOIN IN SUPPORTING THIS RESOLUTION. VANDEN HEUVEL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEMBERSHIP, TEXT, MEETING AGENDA, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 25-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977GENEVA06234
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770289-0975, D770264-1019
Format: TEL
From: GENEVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770724/aaaaauer.tel
Line Count: 143
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fed28264-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 GENEVA 6190
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1762844
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: 63RD ECOSOC: AGENDA ITEM 4: ADMISSION OF PLO TO FULL MEMBERSHIP IN ECWA
TAGS: EGEN, PLOS, ECOSOC, UN, PLO, (WELLS, MELISSA F)
To: STATE TEL AVIV
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fed28264-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009